

THE SHORTER READING.

At the present time, attention is fixed upon the translation of the Bible called the American Revised Version. While it has been most vigorously pushed upon the people by the publishing house that controls the copyright, it has not been accepted by the great mass of the people as a superior substitute for the King James version. The last Assembly of our Church has made it necessary that we consider the relative merits of the much advertised American version and the King James. In sending down to the Presbyteries the report of the committee on the proof-texts for the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms, the Assembly made no comment upon the plan followed by the committee which placed the American above the King James, when there was a difference (page 124, Minutes, 1909). We have carefully studied the American Version since it was issued. It was read and marked while the good wife read aloud first the King James, then the English Revised Version. While the American is vulnerable in many points, too many for a newspaper review, there is one of a most serious nature to which attention is directed. One of the rules of criticism is that known as Parson's: "That when there is a difference in readings from the various manuscripts, the shorter is to be preferred to the longer." The philosophy of such a rule is that when additions are made they are copied from marginal explanations which are not a part of the original text. It is assumed that the writing on the margin is an unwarranted addition, or that the copyist was disposed to add new words or phrases or clauses. Unless human nature has changed since the early apostolic days, the reasoning is in error. The experience and testimony of many stenographers and clerks today will be just the opposite. The tendency is to omit rather than to add. The writing on the margin shows that the copyist omitted certain words and placed them on the margin for convenience. The longer reading is, in modern experience, most apt to be correct. The American Revised Version follows Parson's rule of the Shorter Reading most abundantly. In the gospel by Matthew, it is used fifty-six times. Some change a word, some a sentence, as in Matthew 6:13, where the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer is omitted—"For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." We did not count how often the rule is used in the whole Bible, but entirely too often.

C. T. Thomson.

Kosciusko, Miss.

There was a time when business men locked up their valuables most carefully, fastened the huge doors, and closed the thick shutters. Now the same men think the greatest security is found in having a flood of light always turned upon their possessions. Thieves do not dare to break through and steal when the glare of light will be upon them. One has happily suggested this as an illustration of the manner in which we should treat the precious Word of God. Put it in the light! Do not attempt to defend it! Let it speak and show for itself!

Devotional and Selections

"THE LORD'S PRAYER."

Oh, prayer of prayers, when softly lisped
By infant lips beside the mother's knee,
Thou art indeed th' appeal of helplessness
Unto the All-Father's heart! But none the less,
When whispered low, in simple faith, by him
Whom years have crowned with honors and with fame!
Who learns from childhood to believe and love,
To worship and obey—to him thou art
The very Pearl of Prayers. The love of Christ
Is there, and, like a thread of gold, binds fast
The first petition to the very last,
And from the heart of the great brotherhood
Of man rises, like incense sweet and pure,
The murmur of "Amen" forevermore.

—O. H.

THE MINISTER AS A GOOD "MIXER."

Dr. John F. Cowan, of Haini, has a sensible article on the above subject in the Homiletic Review. He says:

"More than to anyone else, it is 'up to' the minister to 'make good' with all classes of men. Therefore the minister must be a good 'mixer' with men. That is to say, he must be able to come freely into contact with all classes of men, on an equal and easy personal footing, and not merely on a professional footing. The minister who can take the Christly aroma into the lodge, the social club, the political club, the workingman's union, and the farmer's grange, has a dozen chances to make the old truths appeal as something fresh and down to date, as against one chance in the case of the minister who is a recluse, a bookish, seminaryish preacher, however brilliant his pulpit power.

"Ministers do mix with men in times of sickness and trouble, though sometimes reluctantly. I once overheard a Protestant layman lamenting the fact that, when there was an explosion in one of the iron mills, a Catholic priest might be found on the scene before the smoke cleared away, to administer extreme unction to any of his unfortunate parishioners who might need it; but the Protestant ministers would probably wait until they were sent for, and then leave their sermonizing unwillingly. This is not a true picture of the great mass of Protestant ministers. Neither is it true that most ministers prefer feminine society to male, though some have such an impression. Why?

"The question of the minister mixing in politics is a mooted one. It can not be discussed here to any extent. But Washington Gladden certainly lost none of his ministerial dignity or influence when he served as a member of the Columbus board of aldermen. He proved a good 'mixer.' Who does not believe that Edward Everett Hale would have been even more influential as a minister of God on the floor of the United States Senate than as its chaplain? That was good 'mixing' when the ministers' meeting of Boston elected representatives to the labor unions. A good 'mixer' will be foremost in the village improvement society of his parish. He will preach the gospel of 'Cleanliness is next to godliness' most effectively in that way. That was a good 'mixer' with the boys of his parish who took twenty-five of them to see the Harvard-Dart-